MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ___
no X

Property Name: Simonds Bridge (SHA 021770) Inventory Number: AA-2387

Address: Fort Meade Road (MD 198) Carrying MD 198 over the Little Patuxent River Historic district: ___ yes X no

City: Laurel Zip Code: 20724 County: Anne Arundel

USGS Quadrangle(s): Laurel

Property Owner: State Highway Administration Tax Account ID Number: ___

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): ___ Tax Map Number: ___

Project: MD 198 from MD 295 to MD 32 Agency: State Highway Administration

Agency Prepared By: EHT Traceries, Inc.

Preparer's Name: Jeanne Barnes Date Prepared: 9/12/2007

Documentation is presented in: ___

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ___ Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: __A __B __C __D Considerations: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: ___

Inventory Number: ___ Eligible: ___ yes Listed: ___ yes

Site visit by MHT Staff ___ yes X no Name: ___ Date: ___

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Simonds Bridge is a simple-span, deck-girder bridge, located along Maryland 198, which runs east to west over the Little Patuxent River. The river, which flows south under the bridge, is lined with wooded forest. The bridge is located within the boundaries of Fort George G. Meade and located in Laurel, Maryland. The bridge spans Maryland 198 (Fort Meade Road), a two-lane highway, approximately 30-feet wide. The total length of the bridge is approximately 80 feet. The bridge is constructed of steel I-beams and supported by large concrete abutments on both ends. The steel parapets are visible above the concrete bridge deck.

A pedestrian bridge was constructed adjacent to Simonds Bridge, circa 1990. The iron Howe truss pedestrian bridge is located north of Simonds Bridge and runs east to west over the Little Patuxent River.

Simonds Bridge, located along Maryland 198, was constructed by the State Roads Commission in 1944. The bridge was completed on May 31, 1944, at a cost of $111,247.90.(1) This portion of Anne Arundel County has remained relatively undeveloped due to the construction and expansion of nearby large-scale developments such as Fort George G. Meade, the District of Columbia Children's Center, and the existence of the 12,841-acre Patuxent Wildlife Refuge.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended ___ **Eligibility not recommended** X

Criteria: __A __B __C __D **Considerations:** __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

MHT Comments:

Tom Charlemont ✓ 11/30/07
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services **Date**

Beverly Entzminger 12/3/07
Reviewer, National Register Program **Date**

20070 3682

Simonds Bridge replaced an earlier bridge at the same location, known as Welch Bridge.(2) Little is known regarding Welch Bridge, including its materials, size, construction or demolition dates. As the automobile became more pervasive in the second quarter of the twentieth century, many bridges, such as Welch Bridge, had to be reinforced or replaced in order to accommodate the weight of heavier vehicular traffic. This was particularly important for Simonds Bridge. Located within the boundaries of Fort Meade, Simonds Bridge provided access over the Little Patuxent River for both civilian and military vehicles traveling along MD 198.

Fort Meade was established in 1917 when the United States Department of War acquired 4,000 acres of land between Odenton and Laurel, in Anne Arundel County. Originally known as Camp Meade, the facility was renamed Fort George G. Meade in 1928 when it became a permanent post. Conceived as a World War I (1914-1918) training facility, the base offered training in infantry combat operations as well as a mustard agent training area. From 1918 to 1932, the United States Army Tank School operated out of Fort Meade. With the United States entering World War II (1941-1945) in 1941, Fort Meade expanded to 13,596 acres to meet increased training requirements of soldiers. Wartime activities at the base necessitated a modern bridge, resulting in the replacement of Welch Bridge with Simonds Bridge. Fort Meade continued to operate as a training facility until 1988 when several portions of the site - totaling 9,000 acres - were identified for closure under the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC).(3)

Bridge construction in Maryland began to be standardized in the early-twentieth century, particularly for reinforced concrete beam, slab, and girder bridges.(4) By the 1930s, steel girders and reinforced-concrete bridges became the most popular style of bridge in Maryland.(5) Following World War II (1941-1945), the nation's highway system was rapidly expanding, and many state highway departments adopted continuous-span, deck-girder bridges and concrete girder bridges for overpasses and other short and mid-length spans.(6) Simonds Bridge is typical of this construction in Maryland. Several other bridges of the same construction have been determined eligible and are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Simonds Bridge remains in good condition and retains its integrity of workmanship. The integrity of materials and design have been compromised due to alterations that occurred in 1991. The road has not been widened or moved and has retained integrity of location and setting. Simonds Bridge has been in continual use since its construction in 1944 and has retained its integrity of association and feeling.

Simonds Bridge was constructed in 1944, replacing a previous bridge in the same location over the Little Patuxent River. This structure is not associated with events and trends that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and is not recommended for eligibility under Criterion A. The structure is not associated with any person or group of persons of outstanding importance to the community, state, or nation, therefore, Simonds Bridge is not eligible under Criterion B. Simonds Bridge is a common example of bridge construction in Maryland in the second-quarter of the twentieth century, and does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, nor does it represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value and is thus disqualified for eligibility under Criterion C. Simonds Bridge was not evaluated under Criterion D. Therefore, it is recommended that Simonds Bridge is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B, or C.

1) State Roads Commission, Report of the State Roads Commission of Maryland for the Fiscal Years 1943-1944 (Baltimore, MD: State Roads Commission, 1945), 281.
2) Topographic Map of Anne Arundel County, 1924, available at Maryland Historical Society.
3) Maryland Department of Environment, "Fort George G. Meade," Maryland Department of Environment, ERRP Fact Sheet, http://www.mde.state.md.us/assests/document/brownfields/Fort_Meade.pdf, accessed August 14, 2007.
4) P.A.C. Spero & Company and Louis Berger & Associates, "Modern Transportation in Maryland, 1900-1960," Historic Highway

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ **Eligibility not recommended** _____

Criteria: __A __B __C __D **Considerations:** __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

MHT Comments:

_____ _____

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services **Date**

_____ _____

Reviewer, National Register Program **Date**

Bridges in Maryland: 1631-1960, Historic Context Report (Revised October 1995), 30-31.
5) Dixie Legler and Carol M. Highsmith, Historic Bridges of Maryland (Crownsville: Maryland Historical Trust Press, 2002), 22.
6) Richard L. Cleary, Bridges (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2007), 49.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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_____ _____

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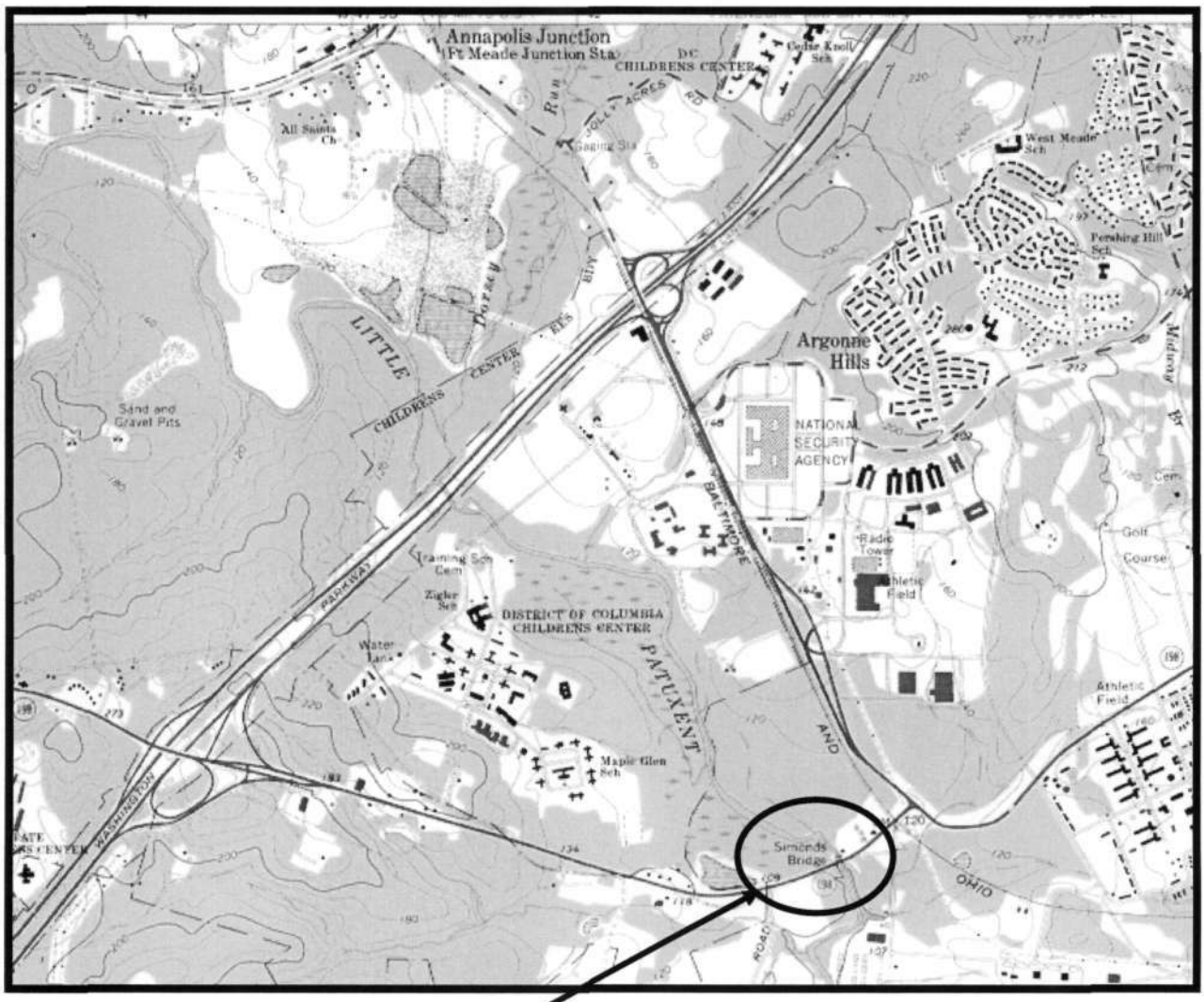
AA-2387

Simonds Bridge (SHA 021770), Carrying MD 198 over the Little Patuxent River
Laurel, Anne Arundel County, MD
Top - View from Little Patuxent River, looking north
Bottom – Simonds Bridge and pedestrian bridge, looking northwest
Photographed by EHT Traceries, Inc., 2007

AA-2387

Simonds Bridge (SHA 021770), Carrying MD 198 over the Little Patuxent River
Laurel, Anne Arundel County, MD
Top – Simonds Bridge, looking southeast
Photographed by EHT Traceries, Inc., 2007



Simonds Bridge (AA-2387)
Carrying MD 198 over the Little Patuxent River
Laurel, Anne Arundel County, MD
Laurel Quad, USGS Topographic Map, 1965, Revised 1979
Prepared by EHT Traceries, Inc., 2007

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Simonds Bridge (SHA 021770) AA-2387
Carrying MD 198 over the Little Patuxent River
Anne Arundel County, MD
EHT Traceries, Inc.
August 2007
MD SHPO
Simonds Bridge and pedestrian bridge, looking west
#1 of 3


LITTLE
PATUXENT
RIVER

Simonds Bridge (SHA 021770) AA-2387
Carrying MD 198 over the Little Patuxent River
Anne Arundel County, MD
EHT Traceries, Inc.
August 2007
MD SHPO
Simonds Bridge, looking southeast
#2 of 3

Simonds Bridge (SHA 021770) AA-2387
Carrying MD 198 over the Little Patuxent River
Anne Arundel County, MD
EHT Traceries, Inc.
August 2007
MD SHPO
View from Little Patuxent River, looking north
#3 of 3